

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-4 (Cancelled).

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A method for quenching a metallic material,
comprising:

adjusting the pressure on the surface of a quenching oil to 13-70 kPa;

wherein ~~said the~~ quenching oil ~~comprises~~ consists of:

(A) ___ a base oil having a kinematic viscosity at 40 °C of 40 mm²/s or more;

and

(B) ___ a vapor blanket breaking agent, the vapor blanket breaking agent being present in an amount of from 1 to 30% by mass based on a total mass of the quenching oil.

Claim 6 (Cancelled).

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 5, wherein ~~said the~~ base oil is ~~a base oil that~~ has a characteristic time of 2.5 or less, in the test of heat treating oils in JIS K 2242.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 5, wherein the kinematic viscosity at 40 °C of ~~said the~~ base oil is from 40 to 300 mm²/s.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 5, wherein the quenching oil comprises ~~said the~~ vapor blanket breaking agent in an amount of 5 to 30% ~~or more~~ by mass based on the total mass of the ~~said~~ quenching oil.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 5, wherein the pressure on the surface of the quenching oil is adjusted to 15-70 kPa.

Claim 11 (Cancelled).

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 5, wherein ~~said~~ the base oil is a ~~base oil that~~ has a characteristic time of 2.5 or less, in the test of heat treating oils in JIS K 2242, ~~;~~

the kinematic viscosity at 40 °C of ~~said~~ the base oil is 40 to 300 mm²/s, ~~the quenching oil comprises said vapor blanket breaking agent in an amount of 5 % or more by mass based on said quenching oil, and~~

the pressure on the surface of the quenching oil is adjusted to 15-70 kPa.

Claims 13-14 (Cancelled).

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 5, wherein ~~said~~ the base oil is a ~~base oil that~~ has a characteristic time of 2.0 or less, in the test of heat treating oils in JIS K 2242.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 5, wherein ~~said~~ the base oil has a flash point of 230 °C or more.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 5, wherein ~~said the~~ base oil comprises 5% or less by mass of a light cut ~~whose having a boiling point is below of~~ less than 400 °C.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 5, wherein ~~said the~~ base oil comprises mineral oil.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 5, wherein ~~said the~~ metallic material is steel.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 5, wherein quenching is performed in a vacuum furnace.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 5, wherein quenching is performed in a vacuum carburizing furnace.

Claims 22-23 (Cancelled).

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 5, further comprising contacting ~~said the~~ metallic material with ~~said the~~ quenching oil when the pressure on the surface of the quenching oil is 13-70 kPa.